

**From:** [Nystedt, John](#)  
**To:** [Hughes, John P](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Removal of wolves due to disturbance of sacred sites?  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2022 4:59:39 PM

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That's a very interesting question, John! And one for which I have no answer, one way or another, particularly since I haven't been closely involved with wolves with tribes. I recommend asking Sarah Rinkevich since she is and has, having recently conducted wolf TEK interviews with tribes in the NW and done her doctorate work on Fort Apache where wolves were reintroduced. Perhaps even more useful, Tim Patronski, Midwest NAL, may know or could point you to someone since the wolf figures so prominently in many tribal cultures there; as you know they have an issues with wolf hunts but are themselves hunters of ungulates. It may also be worthwhile touching base with Crystal Lionetti, AK NAL, since there are so many wolves there too. And...theoretically speaking, I can't think of a sacred animal - wolf predation example, but I would caution us to be careful about classifying species so strictly since tribes take a holistic view of the world and even what we consider game species take on a more spiritual significance for them.

I hope that helps in some way, and I'd be very interested to hear about anything you learn!

Good luck. And take care,

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**From:** Hughes, John P <[john\\_hughes@fws.gov](mailto:john_hughes@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 20, 2022 1:46 PM  
**To:** Nystedt, John <[john\\_nystedt@fws.gov](mailto:john_nystedt@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Removal of wolves due to disturbance of sacred sites?

John,

I have an obscure question for you - do you know of any instances where a tribe has requested removal of Mexican wolves due to their denning activities constituting a disturbance of sacred sites, or because of their impacts on sacred animals (e.g., black bears)? Our proposed rule allows for the potential removal of wolves from tribal lands if they are causing significant impacts to ungulate populations, but this is based mainly on a hunting opportunity basis; I'm not aware of any conflicts between wolf occurrence and sacred sites and/or animals. I'd appreciate your thoughts when you get a chance, and hope you are well--

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